

committed the "unpardonable sin" of interfering in the life of a fellow human being, all for the sake of an idea of "reflected usefulness" to his own life. He has been, all along, aware of his interference in Roderick's life, and had been amazed at his own temerity when he reflected "that he was really meddling with the simple stillness of this small New England home, and that he had ventured to disturb so much living security in the interest of a far-away fantastic hypothesis."¹⁷

Rowland persists with his folly because the hypothesis of "reflected usefulness" takes hold of him so firmly that he cannot abandon it for his own fulfilment. His hypothesis is so precious to him that he is callous in his disregard of the freedom and sanctity of human life. What Roderick resents most is that he is not given the freedom to live his life. He tells Rowland, "You seem to have taken the measure of my liberty with extraordinary minuteness."¹⁸ He argues "I'm not a small boy nor a country lout any longer, and whatever I do I do with my eyes open. When I do well the merit's my own? if I do ill the fault's my own!"¹⁹ This reveals incidentally that moral responsibility is a fruitful ingredient in the artist's education. Roderick wants to feel that he is his own master and responsible only to himself. He wants freedom to shape his career, and as an artist he knows the value and sanctity of his freedom. Men should be allowed to "live on their own terms and according to their own inexorable needs!"²⁰ Do not play the Creator, James says, to your fellow human beings; respect the individual's life and liberty. He, who could do nothing about his own destiny, presumes to shape the destiny of an innocent man and in the process destroys him altogether. Rowland Mallet's name is significant as the mallet is an instrument with which things are beaten into a shape. Mallet tries to beat his hypothesis into a shape, thereby involving an innocent man in suffering and death. A man of intellectual refinement and moral ardour commits a spiritual blunder by under-

estimating the liberty of the individual and the sanctity of human life. It is no wonder, therefore, that Rowland, the most rational of men, in the end lashes his conduct "with a scourge of steel, accusing it of cruelty and injustice," for he has learnt a lesson in spiritual refinement.

Roderick Hudson thus establishes the Jamesian universe of discourse within two opposing, and yet mutually complementary patterns of refinement, intellectual and spiritual* How to reconcile